FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2007, 3:00 P.M.
HOLMES STUDENT CENTER SKY ROOM


Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.


I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 P.M.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved, with the addition of consideration of the Ad hoc Committee on Managing Enrollments under New Business.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 29, 2006 FACULTY SENATE MEETING

The minutes were approved as written.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

P Stoddard gave a status report on the Task Force on Strategic Planning has met a couple of times since the last time we met. Three “round table” meetings (about 35 participants in each) were held concurrently to further refine the outcomes of the various interviews held in December. Out of this came a picture of Northern as unique in its commitment to both teaching and research, as well as a keen awareness of its regional impact. This basic message came out of all three meetings. The progress of the Task Force can be followed at http://www.niu.edu/strategicplan/, which also allows for feedback from the university community.

S. Cunningham (Assoc. VP. Admin, Human Resources) updated the Senate on pension issues. He first reviewed the provisions of P.A. 94-4 (the pension reform bill from last year), and then discussed modifications or clarifications that have been made to those provisions, specifically the “6% rule.” Under this rule, the University would be billed for “excess” annuities resulting from
an employee receiving a greater than 6% increment in any or all of his/her last four years (actually, the four highest-earning years, typically the last four). While this would not directly affect the employee, it could result in disincentives to grant that employee any increment over 6%, summer funding, or even a promotion. To rectify this, several exceptions have been enacted. These all expire in 2011, when the issue of pension funding will also be revisited. The exceptions are for those employees who go from half- to full-time, get vacation payouts, take on academic overloads, or are promoted to a position with new duties and responsibilities. It should be pointed out people retiring under the money purchase option would not be affected, but that option is no longer available for people hired after July 1, 2005.

S. Cunningham also pointed out that every five years SURS updates their actuarial assumptions their annuity tables. The next such update will be this July.

V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Review of procedures of dismissal with cause – refer to Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.

P. Stoddard stated that the current bylaws are vague with regards to justifications and procedures in cases of dismissal with cause. As a result, it is desirable to have the Senate consider proposing a revision University bylaw 7.3. Any changes would not affect any such cases that may be pending.

The motion passed.

VII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic Affairs – Daniel Kempton, Chair – no report

B. Economic Status of the Profession – Cason Snow, Chair – no report

C. Resource, Space, and Budget – C.T. Lin, Chair – no report

D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities – Janet Holt, Chair – no report

E. Rules and Governance – Nancy Castle, Chair – no report

F. Elections and Legislative Oversight – Earl Hansen, Chair – no report
VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Salary increments (Page 10)

In light of the lack of new data, C. Snow moved to postpone discussion of salary increments until the February Senate meeting.

The motion was seconded and passed.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Ad Hoc Committee on Managing Enrollment

D. Kempton noted that five years ago then-Provost Ivan Legg created the ad hoc Commission on Enrollment Management, and that body has met at least once a year ever since then, outliving the ad hoc nature of the commission. Given the central nature of enrollment to a University, it is desirable to have faculty on any such committee.

It was agreed upon that P. Stoddard would meet with the President and Provost to get their input, and to remind them that according to Point III in the preamble of the Constitution, “Faculty shall predominate in all policy decisions relating to the faculty personnel system, the university curriculum and policy decisions concerning admissions and academic standards” (emphasis added).

X. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Paul Stoddard – no report

B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee – Joseph “Buck” Stephen and Ferald Bryan – no report

C. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Paul Stoddard and Xueshu Song – no report

D. BOT Legislation, Audit and External Affairs Committee – Rachel Turner and Bobbie Cesarek – no report

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – no report

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

There were none.
XII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Minutes, Academic Planning Council
B. Minutes, Athletic Board minutes
C. Minutes, Campus Security and Environmental Quality
D. Minutes, Committee on Initial Teacher Certification
E. Minutes, Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum
F. Minutes, Graduate Council
G. Minutes, Undergraduate Coordinating Council minutes
H. Minutes, University Assessment Panel
I. Minutes, University Benefits Committee minutes

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn was made by Buck Stephen; Jim Giles seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 4:11 P.M.